

The Catholic Press

BY ERNEST R. HULL, S.J.

Editor Examiner, Bombay.

"Mission" means "a sending"; and properly the Catholic Press is not sent. Like Topsy, in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," it is a thing that "grewed"; a natural output of Catholic energy, a natural expression of Catholic life, imposing a mission on itself. For "mission," therefore, I must understand "proper aim and object."

Using "mission" in this sense, I should say that the mission of the Catholic Press is identical with the mission of the Catholic Church. The mission of the Catholic Church can be taken in a narrower or a broader sense. (1) In its stricter sense, the mission of the Church is to preserve and transmit the revealed message of Christian faith, morals and worship to mankind; and to persuade as many as possible to accept it and live up to it, with eternal salvation as the result. (2) But in its wider sense the mission of the Church is, in addition to the above, to encourage and aid every kind of human activity, mental or physical, material as well as spiritual, which helps to the betterment of mankind in body, mind and soul; everything which tends to a higher self-development and self-realization of man's nature as God intended it to be.

The Church's encouragement in this line extends not only to things which directly promote eternal salvation, but also to things which are merely innocent and indif-

ferent thereto. Thus the Church can be deeply interested even in athletics or in trade, simply on the ground that they are both human things making in some way for the betterment of the race. The Church always retains in the background a consciousness of her higher aims, without always obtruding them or making them the only object of her life. *Humani nihil a me alienum puto*, says the Church. "My work is not only to lead men up the steep and thorny path to heaven, but to make that steep and thorny path easier by a reasonable and innocent enjoyment of this life as they go along. It is my hope, by encouraging such reasonable and innocent enjoyment, to stop mankind from indulging in unreasonable and vicious enjoyment, which makes for misery and ruin—in other words, to keep men from the primrose path of dalliance by making the steep and thorny path as pleasant as possible; to lighten the burden of self-control and mortification as much as may be, so that the weak shoulders, as well as the strong, may be able to bear it."

In defining the mission of the Catholic Church in its wider sense, I have already defined the mission of the Catholic Press. No Catholic paper is bound to cover the whole field. Some can take exclusively the essential work of enforcing the message of Catholic revelation, and thus enter the category of the strictly and purely religious paper. This section can be sub-divided thus: (1) those papers which appeal to the religious emotions and foster piety and devotion; and (2) those which appeal to the intellect and foster Catholic knowledge and principle. It must not be forgotten that if *piety* is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, *knowledge* is another of them; and one which requires special cultivation in these present days of education—and of rationalism. Now

what I find is that papers and magazines which foster piety and devotion are extremely numerous and widespread, and varied enough to meet all needs. Everything which *can* be done is being done in this line. What we want is not to add to their number, but to secure a wider circulation of those which exist. The intellectual side of the Catholic Press is the one which, in my opinion, needs developing, both in quantity and in quality. Much is being done, of course; but there is much more to be done, if we wish to counteract the influence of a non-Catholic or anti-Catholic intellectualism which is pressing on the Catholic mind from all sides.

If I may speak personally, this is the idea which dominates my mind in the conducting of the *Examiner* in Bombay. That large section of Catholics whose piety is proof against external influences is amply provided for by a whole world of devout literature. My sympathy goes out to those who are not naturally pious, and who need a strong foundation of intellectual principles in order to keep themselves up to the mark; who are constantly being flooded with all sorts of anti-religious ideas which upset their minds, destroy their grip of the faith, and drag them down—some into indifferentism, others into positive unbelief. Such men, I say, need fortifying intellectually. Their minds want filling with Catholic ideas and Catholic principles and Catholic knowledge—so that they can give a reason, to themselves and to others, of the faith which is still precariously lingering in them. I want to draw back those who have already gone far on the downward grade, and also, by anticipation, to keep back those who are in danger of beginning to slide.

Hence my own program is, first to furnish the more or less educated reader with a mind full of Catholic

knowledge, both of facts and principles; secondly, to present this knowledge in so simple and entertaining a way as to make him feel interested and appreciative, and to wish for more. In this way the continuous reading of the paper is intended to become practically an accumulative Catholic education. In order to do this I adopt certain expedients as follows:

First, there is always before my mind a fine passage of Maurice Francis Egan: "Why should I, who have cultivated all my life the art of saying serious things lightly, be accused of not touching the deeper currents? It seems to me that most writers in Catholic periodicals insist too much on a lack of humor. If a truth is not said ponderously it has no real importance for them."

Everybody knows how the scattering of half a dozen currants in a penny bun gives a marvelous piquancy to what otherwise would be an insipid mass of dough. The same applies to a serious article on a deeply intellectual or religious subject. Some literary instinct impels me to sprinkle my theological bun with currants of playfulness, whose homeliness and unexpectedness are sometimes greeted with astonishment by the staid purist. But who cares for the staid purist when hungry souls are at stake? Such brightening insertions have the effect of enabling an average reader to work through the stiffest of essays with ease, and to come to the end of it with a feeling of refreshment instead of a feeling of depression. I have watched the result of this instinctive expedient of mine for more than eleven years, and can not overestimate the value of the currant bun policy, as an aid to assimilating the most solid and serious Catholic instruction. Whether a given *jeu d'esprit* is always happy or not, I can not vouch. Of course, such a literary expedient must come

natural and "to the manner born," if it is to succeed; and no amount of *jeux d'esprit* will avail unless the solid matter is behind it, clearly and forcibly expressed.

This, therefore, is the first item in the program for a Catholic paper—to convey every week some solid piece of strictly Catholic instruction, made appetizing and attractive; so that people will not only persevere in reading it, but will also enjoy it, and assimilate it and remember it.

(2) But this part must not be overdone. The dose of strictly religious matter must be limited to suit the capacity of the circle of readers. Sandwiched in must come articles of lighter interest covering the range of general culture—sometimes of Catholic bearing, sometimes purely secular in nature—which at the same time are instructive, and help to build up the Catholic mind on healthy and innocent lines. I refer to articles on points of history, or travel, or literature, or science, or art, selected for variety like the menu of a first-class dinner.

(3) Even articles of pure and simple amusement must be thrown in occasionally, so as to bring about the relaxation of a hearty laugh. I know of many readers of the *Examiner* who invariably look for the jokes first; which, like a *hors d'œuvre*, create an appetite for more solid dishes. Thus picking and choosing, they get into such a good humor as to end in reading the paper from cover to cover, winding up with some stiff and solid treatise which, except for this preparatory stimulation, they would hardly venture to face. In this way they manage to get the whole dinner down, and rise up from the table feeling that they have enjoyed it, and are better for it. I take it that the above program is in itself the common property of all Catholic papers, and only varies in proportion or color

according to local circumstances, or the individual mentality of each editor.

(4) Besides positive or expositive Catholic instruction, there must be, according to the environment, a certain amount of controversy—the refutation not only of direct attacks on the Church, but also of those counter-theories of unbelief or of crooked ethics which are struggling so hard for the mastery of the world. Such subjects possess a liveliness of themselves which does not need much rhetorical aid.

Several cautions are, however, forced upon my mind by the defective way in which such polemics are sometimes conducted. First, let the writer know the other side practically as well as he knows his own. Secondly, let him present the other side with absolute correctness, fairness and impartiality. Thirdly, let him, in spite of provocation, always remain the calm Christian gentleman, and always treat his adversary with courteous reserve, free from harsh vituperation or personal abuse—even enemies of the *Menace* type not excepted, though I half expect some disagreement here. It is possible to administer the severest public horsewhipping with a bow and a smile; and it becomes all the more telling because of the bow and the smile. Personally I always entertain the classic maxim: "Treat your enemy as if he were one day to become your friend." Wonderful to relate, in a large number of cases my enemy—taken apparently off his legs by my politeness—has actually become a friend; so much so that several strong controversies in the *Examiner* have ended in a cordial exchange of private correspondence between my enemy and myself. If not converted, he has at least been tamed; and that by "the soft" though by no means weak answer which "turneth away

wrath." In short, there is a magical power in controversial self-restraint. Fourthly, let the writer never make use of bogus or weak arguments on his own side. They are always liable to a triumphant refutation; they fail to carry conviction; they give an appearance of weakness even to a strong cause. Take always the select argument which really goes to the root of the question and settles it; and see that it is hammered home in all its inherent strength. Fifthly, in practical points, where no principle is at stake, never defend your own side where your own side is clearly in the wrong. Rise serenely above mere partisanship. You may thereby secure for yourself, as one of my correspondents once put it, "the *invidious* reputation of being impartial"; and may be accused of "giving a handle to the enemy"; but your impartiality will be appreciated by the better minds on both sides, and will give you an authority and influence which is well worth the while. Lastly, let the writer realize that the most satisfying answer to a difficulty is the one which acknowledges the difficulty and, instead of brushing it aside by strong or evasive rhetoric, really faces it and goes to the bottom of it, and does not pretend to solve it beyond that point at which the argument stops. In short, let a Catholic apologist or controversialist make himself so *obtrusively reasonable* in all he says, that even those who are still unconvinced will recognize that at least he has "a case."

I am afraid it is rather egotistical to have devoted so much of this article to my own personal work. But "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"; and after all, one grain of practical experience is worth a ton of abstract reasoning.

I will not leave out of count the idea of a Catholic

paper which is in its substantial contents secular. The Catholicism of such a paper consists essentially in keeping out those things which are not for the betterment but for the "worsement" of mankind; thus making the paper *negatively* Catholic, with at most a tinge of positive Catholicism thrown in. Such a paper means at least the substantiation of an innocent for a harmful thing. But besides this, it is capable of positive influence on secular thought and action, and on the tone of public opinion, redounding to the betterment of mankind; and therefore it falls within the mission of the Catholic Press taken in its widest sense.

A CATHOLIC DAILY NEWSPAPER

BY LAWRENCE F. FLICK, M.D.

A saintly priest has well said that, "If the daily newspaper as it comes into our homes were to be given to the world in book form it would have to be placed upon the Index." No thoughtful observer of our times who has the welfare of mankind at heart would venture to disagree with him. Whilst there is good as well as evil in the daily newspaper even of to-day, the evil has outgrown the good and has become dangerous on account of its insidiousness. The good comes like the light of the day; we see it and rejoice in it because it brightens up everything. The evil comes like the invisible dust in the air; it penetrates our thoughts, reaching every nook and corner of our minds unperceived, until by its accumulation it has besmirched our moral views and has made evil lose its ugliness for us. We condone the evil on account of its evanescence, failing to realize that although its impress is momentary the constant recurrence of it produces a lasting influence.

The daily newspaper of to-day is in a decadent state. By common consent and practice the daily newspaper has three functions: to inform the people; to communicate between buyer and seller, and to mould public thought. Only one of these functions remains anything like normal, namely, that of communicating between buyer and seller and even this has been perverted. Because the success of the daily paper depends upon the number of its readers,

keen competition for readers has brought the price of it below the cost of production and has widened and thinned down its function of informing the people into one of pandering to their curiosity, animal instincts and prejudices. As a logical sequence the burden of earning dividends has fallen upon the advertiser, and the function of moulding public thought has been sacrificed to his interests and to the whims of the people.

While society in general has something very vital at stake in the newspaper's decadence, Catholics have more at stake than society in general. It strikes at our civilization, but it also strikes at Christianity the foundation of our civilization. If Catholics really want to hand down their precious heritage of faith in its full strength and vigor to their children and their children's children they must reform the press at least in so far as they themselves use it. A Catholic school education and a sermon once a week with even the best home environment will not withstand the post-graduate work of the newspaper, which in picture and type daily presents the weakness, crimes, scandals and sins of the community in attractive coloring as though they were the deeds of heroes and martyrs. It is man's nature to become imbued with what he sees, hears and reads until it is part of him and he reflects it in his acts.

The daily newspaper has every qualification for good that it has for evil; it remains for man to make it an agent for good. There are always more edifying acts in a community than disedifying ones; more good deeds done than bad ones. For every faithless husband and wife there are hundreds of faithful ones. For every one who commits a crime there are thousands who do virtuous deeds and noble acts. For every evil act which is dressed

up as an heroic deed there are thousands of real heroic deeds which could be set forth in their nakedness. A daily newspaper which would record what is beautiful, good, noble and edifying in the community would be a power for good. It would find many readers, for, after all, there is a better psychological foundation in the people for good than there is for evil. Most Catholics would support it; all ought to support it. Those who would not do so in the beginning could be educated to do so. What people really want in a newspaper is the news. When that has been told simply, briefly and truthfully without nauseating details, whatever more is to be given, most people would prefer to have come from the good side of life rather than from the bad side. It is only the morbid, perverted mind which likes to wallow in intellectual and moral filth and the majority of human beings have normal minds.

New York, Philadelphia and Chicago have large enough Catholic populations inside of a newspaper radius to support a distinctively Catholic daily newspaper. A capital of two million dollars would establish such a paper in any of these cities and carry it to an investment basis. It might take from five to ten years to do it, but it could be done if the project were carefully managed and persevered in. The financial returns after the paper had been securely founded would be ample to justify the undertaking on a commercial basis and the ethical returns and the good which would come to civilization from it would be beyond calculation.

The task of establishing such a paper belongs to the layman. It is peculiarly a function of the "Lay Apostolate." It fits the layman exactly and the layman fits it. It is a business enterprise which can be used to extend the

Kingdom of God and preserve the truths which Christ has revealed to us. There is no preaching in it, merely an acting out in everyday life of the teachings of the Church for the edification of all. It is a way, too, in which help can be extended to the brother outside of the Church who has not been blessed with the faith and to whom the Catholic layman is a brother's keeper. There are thousands of good people in the world clinging to the remnants of a pre-Reformation standard of morality which the story of divorce, dishonesty, political debauchery, murder and everything which is debasing as it appears in the daily press insidiously robs them of, setting them adrift in the ocean of irreligion and immorality. A clean, edifying daily paper might preserve for them this vestige of Catholicity which they have by inheritance and tradition, and perhaps ultimately bring them the full substance of what is now a shadow.

Reformation of the press within itself can scarcely be hoped for on account of the practices which have sprung up in the newspaper business through competition for commercial advantages. It must come from an outside force strong enough to gather and hold readers on an ideal standard of ethics. The Catholic Church undoubtedly is the best equipped and strongest organization for this purpose in the world to-day.

The resources for a Catholic daily newspaper exist. Much of the best newspaper talent in the country is Catholic. There is ample capital in the hands of Catholics for a Catholic daily paper. Catholics who have thought about the matter are willing and ready to do their part. Catholics who have not thought about it are either indifferent or disinclined to do anything. Serious, sober thought would make all realize that in such a task there

lies a duty. Really all that it is necessary to do for bringing into existence what every thoughtful Catholic seems to think ought to exist is to organize the resources at hand, to coordinate them and direct them to the desired end with a strong faith, firm purpose and persevering effort.

Catholics in the United States have built churches, schools, and eleemosynary institutions and have liberally supported them. They have done these things for the preservation of their faith. What they have done, excellent as it is, is incomplete and insufficient until they have buttressed it with the establishment of Catholic daily newspapers. Such papers are necessary for a voice in matters of public interest, for defence of Catholic principles, and above all for correct information on a thousand and one subjects which through ignorance or design are misrepresented or ignored in the daily newspapers as now published. They would serve a splendid purpose for postgraduate work among Catholics by keeping them in touch with the social, philanthropic and intellectual life of the Church, by reports of the happenings in parishes and eleemosynary institutions and of the proceedings of conventions, summer schools and gatherings of various kinds. There is not a day but that something is going on in some part of the United States of interest to Catholics in all parts of the United States, an account of which would be both instructive and inspiring. Such papers would supply to Catholics the crowd-stimulation which comes to men who address vast, sympathetic audiences and would give them some sense of proportion of their numbers compared with other religious bodies and the population at large.

Catholics need Catholic daily papers also for the pur-

pose of strengthening their Catholic weekly papers. Strictly speaking, a weekly newspaper can not be produced because news is too evanescent to be of interest at the end of a week. Catholic weekly papers could be made most interesting and valuable journals were there Catholic daily papers from which to draw the news of the day. They ought to summarize the news of the week and comment on it. At present only a few of them, notably *America*, can even attempt it. Were this generally done they would be much more welcome in Catholic families and when known and understood would be regarded as an indispensable part of the literature of the household. Under existing conditions it is practically impossible to make our Catholic weekly papers what they ought to be because there is no reliable source of information for summaries and comments.

A Catholic daily paper should be planted in the hearts and faith of the rank and file of the laity. The capital should be subscribed by the many not by the few. Twenty thousand subscribers of one hundred dollars each would be ideal for a capital of two million dollars. This would give the paper a Catholic foundation from which it could not be dislodged. A stockholder holding one or even ten shares would place the Catholicity and efficiency of the paper before his dividend; a stockholder holding from one thousand to ten thousand shares probably would reverse these items. Besides, no man can bequeath his Catholicity to his heirs, and it often has happened that the second, third, or fourth generation removed from the most devout parents, has been found outside of the Church. Then again with holders of a few shares of stock, death and the change of fortune could not bring

embarrassment to the management through new, unfriendly interests.

What legacy can a father leave to his son so pregnant with happiness as something which will help him to maintain his faith? What sincere Catholic would not gladly invest thousands of dollars to insure his offspring's loyalty to the faith? In daily Catholic newspapers Catholics have the best security for the faith of their children and their children's children which mere money can give. How much better to invest a little of one's wealth in these than to leave it in forms which corrupt and debauch? One can see the future of one's own family in what has happened to one's own generation of those who have gone before. How many have lost their faith through the influence of a non-Catholic environment and a degenerate press God only knows?

SUPPORTING THE CATHOLIC PRESS

BY WALTER DWIGHT, S.J.

At the annual meetings of many American Catholic Societies it is generally the custom to draw up resolutions urging the Faithful to support whole-heartedly the Catholic Press. It is entirely fitting, of course, that such resolutions should be drafted. But there is danger, as experience has shown, of the matter ending there. For on the delegates' return home no marked lengthening is noted, as a rule, in the subscription list of Catholic papers. Mere resolutions then, however strongly worded, are not enough. A thorough examination is needed of the reasons why the Catholic paper does not reach or interest the readers it should, for when these causes are known perhaps a way can be found for their removal.

First of all it will be readily granted, no doubt, that a well-edited Catholic weekly should enter regularly every Catholic home in the land, for such a paper is indeed a "perpetual mission," and one of the most effective antidotes we have for the obtrusive secularism of our age. But, unfortunately, many a Catholic family that is not too poor to purchase daily several sensational papers can not afford, it seems, to subscribe for their diocesan weekly. Other families there are, however, whose entire income must be spent to buy the actual necessities of life. Now both these classes of households might well be made the objects of a Catholic society's zeal.

Let us suppose, for instance, that a parochial organization maintains a fund that will pay for twenty-five,

fifty, or a hundred annual subscriptions to a Catholic weekly—the more the better. Then let a committee be appointed to see that a copy of the paper in question finds its way into some Catholic home which it would not otherwise enter. The parish school, the Conference of St. Vincent de Paul, the Holy Name Society, or the Knights of Columbus Council, could easily be made the center for promoting such worthy activities, and the amount of good that could thus be done is quite incalculable.

There is another variety of readers that our Catholic papers do not reach effectively. It consists of those who say, "I would read Catholic periodicals if I only found them interesting. But they are filled, as a rule, with articles that do not appeal to me, and the style the contributors use is not attractive." As to this objection, it would seem that Catholics worthy of the name should be interested in all that concerns the spread of the Faith and the advancement of the Church. Catholics to whom such things no longer appeal are making little of the most precious possession they have, the heritage received from the saints. That means that these Catholics are losing their hold on the world unseen. They should quietly make a readjustment of values.

The contributors to Catholic papers and periodicals are, of course, Catholics. Therefore, they always consider from a Catholic point of view, provided the subject admits of such treatment, all questions that come up for discussion, and when current events are commented upon the Catholic attitude of mind will often be in evidence. That is only what the readers of Catholic papers should expect. But to be "interesting" in the way that the contributors to Sunday supplements, cheap magazines and

sensational newspapers succeed in "interesting" those who habitually read them, is a "talent" that the man who writes for Catholic papers has to keep hidden. For while choosing or preparing matter for publication a Catholic editor or journalist, unlike many present-day contributors to secular papers must observe the Ten Commandments. Consequently he may not tear to shreds another's fair name, he may not speak lightly of the marriage bond nor write coarsely and flippantly of sexual sins. Moreover he must be careful to tell the truth and often the truth is not particularly "interesting." Then, too, the Catholic journalist's habit of mind is cautious and conservative, for he belongs to the Church of the Ages, which has seen many a movement that promised to be permanent, cease, disintegrate and pass into oblivion. So he is slow to hail with loud acclaim each charlatan who comes forward with a new nostrum for the body politic, and he refuses to endorse every philosophic heresy or economic vagary of the day. It is not hard, indeed, for a writer to be "interesting" who constantly shows a lofty scorn for the laws of orthodox theology, sound reasoning and correct taste.

If matrimony, however, is considered merely a jest, though a poor one; and marital infidelity another, though a good one; if a man's worth is believed to depend on the wealth he possesses, and his happiness to lie in the amount of self-indulgence he can safely enjoy; if there is no such thing as sin, grace, free will, or judgment to come, why then it is very easy for a contributor who holds such opinions to be "interesting." But the writings of such men are necessarily barred from Catholic papers and periodicals. Our conscientious editors and journalists labor under the handicap of writing to a great extent

on topics that are not agreeable reading to large classes of men to-day and of driving home old-fashioned principles of truth and morality that are not especially "popular" with the present generation.

But to assert that those who contribute to Catholic journals are, for the most part, dull and unattractive writers, is far from the truth. All honor to the noble multitude of men and women who have brought fine abilities to the cause of Catholic journalism, and with but meager compensation are toiling hard to make the pages of our Catholic papers and periodicals bright and readable. Many of these self-sacrificing editors and literary workers could secure from secular dailies higher salaries than those they now receive. But they prefer to devote their lives to the improvement of our Catholic Press. There are many other capable Catholic writers, however, whose services could be enlisted in the same cause were the managers of our Catholic weeklies able to pay the rates these writers are accustomed to receive for their work.

But these salaries would doubtless be offered if the circulation of our Catholic papers and periodicals could be made greater. So it is probable that the best way of improving our Catholic Press is to widen the circle of its readers. If our laity showed in this practical way their zeal for better-edited Catholic papers, managers would doubtless be quick to raise the standard of their periodicals, and our Catholic Press as a whole would then compare more favorably than it does at present with that of certain European countries. For the defects and deficiencies that lessen the worth and attractiveness of our American Catholic Press are chiefly due, in the opinion of many, to the lack of generous support on the

part of the laity. There are other causes, no doubt, but to examine them is not our purpose now. A constantly increasing subscription list will do much to remove all shortcomings. However bright and interesting a paper may be, unless it circulates widely little good will be done. It is like a soul-stirring sermon delivered to empty pews. Therefore, whenever the "Catholic Press" comes up for discussion at the conventions of Catholic Societies let suggestions be invited regarding practical ways of awakening in our laity a keener interest in the improvement of Catholic papers and periodicals. But is not increasing their circulation the best means of heightening their quality?

THE MISSION OF THE CATHOLIC PRESS

BY THE RT. REV. JAMES J. HARTLEY, D.D.

Portions of an Address Delivered before the Catholic Press Association at Detroit, Sept. 14, 1914.

In speaking of the mission of the Catholic Press there are two considerations that rise to the mind:

First of all, it is to be feared that the importance of the Catholic newspaper is not sufficiently understood by Catholics themselves. Secondly, it is also to be feared that there is not sufficient unity of effort on the part of the Catholic Press in its defence of the interests of the Church and the welfare of the people.

Those who are at all familiar with the conditions of the Catholic Press know only too well that our Catholic people, as a rule, do not take very much interest in its prog-

ress—nor do they sufficiently understand its importance. . . .

If Catholic people wish to be enlightened by Catholic thought and filled with true Catholic sentiment and desire to promote intelligent Catholic opinion, they must read Catholic literature and support a Catholic Press. Every Catholic family in America ought at least to have one Catholic paper coming into the household every week. What an example the Catholics of Germany and Belgium have given to the world in this matter. By supporting and multiplying their Catholic papers they gave life to a press at once clever, tactful and vigorous, and they have built up a public Catholic opinion that must be reckoned with whenever the interests of the people and the Church are at stake.

In Germany in the year 1860 there were about twenty Catholic papers with a combined circulation of 50,000 of 60,000. Last summer there were 330 Catholic papers with a circulation that runs into millions. Brave little Belgium, with its splendid Catholic spirit and its courageous sons, then had two Catholic dailies that printed 170,000 copies every day, and still another that printed 70,000 every day, and one more that printed 35,000 every day.

Poor France, with all its Catholic writers, has only one great Catholic newspaper worthy of the name: *La Croix*. No wonder there was no strong Catholic opinion to counteract the outrages and insults that have been heaped upon the Church in that country; there was no strong Catholic press to give expression to it.

We are told that eighty years ago Montalembert, the great Catholic statesman and devoted son of the Church, borrowed 25,000 francs to save from death the *Univers*,

the only Catholic newspaper on the Continent of Europe. Not only that, but his noble Catholic heart inspired him to do more. He subscribed 1,000 francs a month to support the paper, and wrote ringing Catholic articles for its columns every day, but after a while he had to give it up. What sadness in his words: "I could not get a sou for the work. Everybody was willing to give me advice, but nobody would give me money." I am sure his sad words tell the familiar experience of many a noble son in the cause of Catholic journalism. If we wish therefore to have an intelligent, influential and powerful Catholic Press in America, then people of every parish and mission should rise up like one man and extend a generous and helpful hand to the worthy cause.

But they must not stop there: every man and woman who has the interests of the Church at heart should read the Catholic paper that comes to the home, become familiar with the Catholic thought and the Church events of the day, refresh the soul with the beautiful sentiments that pour themselves out in history, in sermon, in verse or story. To do this is to stir up the faith that sometimes falls into a death-like slumber, or is smothered by the sensational, vulgar and sickly literature of the day. The Catholic Press of America therefore will be just exactly what the children of the Catholic Church make it.

In the next place there should always be unity of effort and unity of defence on the part of the Catholic Press in protecting the interests of the Church and the welfare of society. The Catholic Church has no apology to make for the efforts she is making to spread the Gospel of Christ, to promote reverence for the home, and love for country. There is nothing national, provincial or selfish in her teachings, her charity or her sympathy. She is the noble and devoted friend of all mankind without regard

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to race or nationality. She is doing more to build up a sterling manhood and loyal citizenship than any other power upon earth, because she has received the divinely appointed mission, and is blessed with supernatural means to do so.

Therefore, when prejudice, hatred or injustice rise to strike her a cruel blow everywhere in the entire world it becomes the duty of the Catholic Press to speak out fearlessly in her defence, and to place in a clear and convincing manner before the public mind the facts upon which a truthful opinion may be formed. The powers and elements of the poisonous press opposed to her must not be allowed to have a monopoly on public opinion. The public honestly and intelligently informed is generally a fair-minded public, and the Catholic Press is the one powerful means at hand to place that information in an intelligent and convincing manner before all the people. . . .

The cause for which the Catholic Press stands, and around which all its forces should be united, should make it a tower of strength in every nation of the world. That cause is the cause of religion, morality, honest citizenship. It is the mission of the Catholic Church to make her sons true men of God, true citizens of their country. She lives under every form of government in the world, and wherever you find her she is teaching her children the grand lessons of obedience to authority, respect for honesty, love for justice. It is the duty of the Catholic newspaper and Catholic writers to aid her in that glorious mission.

To do the work well they must bring to its aid intelligence, honesty, patience and charity. Oh, what inspiration and conviction it gives the soul to behold men

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practicing what they preach! The Catholic editor, the Catholic writer ought to be not merely a messenger of truth, a confessor of the faith, but the trusted and worthy sentinel on the mighty watch-tower of truth.

In my interview with our late Holy Father, Pius the Tenth, I told him of the Catholic Press Association formed by the Catholic editors and publishers in America some few years ago. I explained its purpose, and I need not tell you he readily understood its utility and importance. I told him there were about fifty publications in the association at present. This was his reply:

"Tell them that I bless them with my whole heart, that they may always promote and defend the teachings of the Gospel and the principles of faith with true Christian loyalty, patience and charity, unflinching in their reverence and obedience to authority, as well as their devotion to the true interests of the Church and the welfare of all the people."

These are his exact words, and you may well receive them as the last will and testament of Pius the Tenth to the Catholic writers and editors of America.